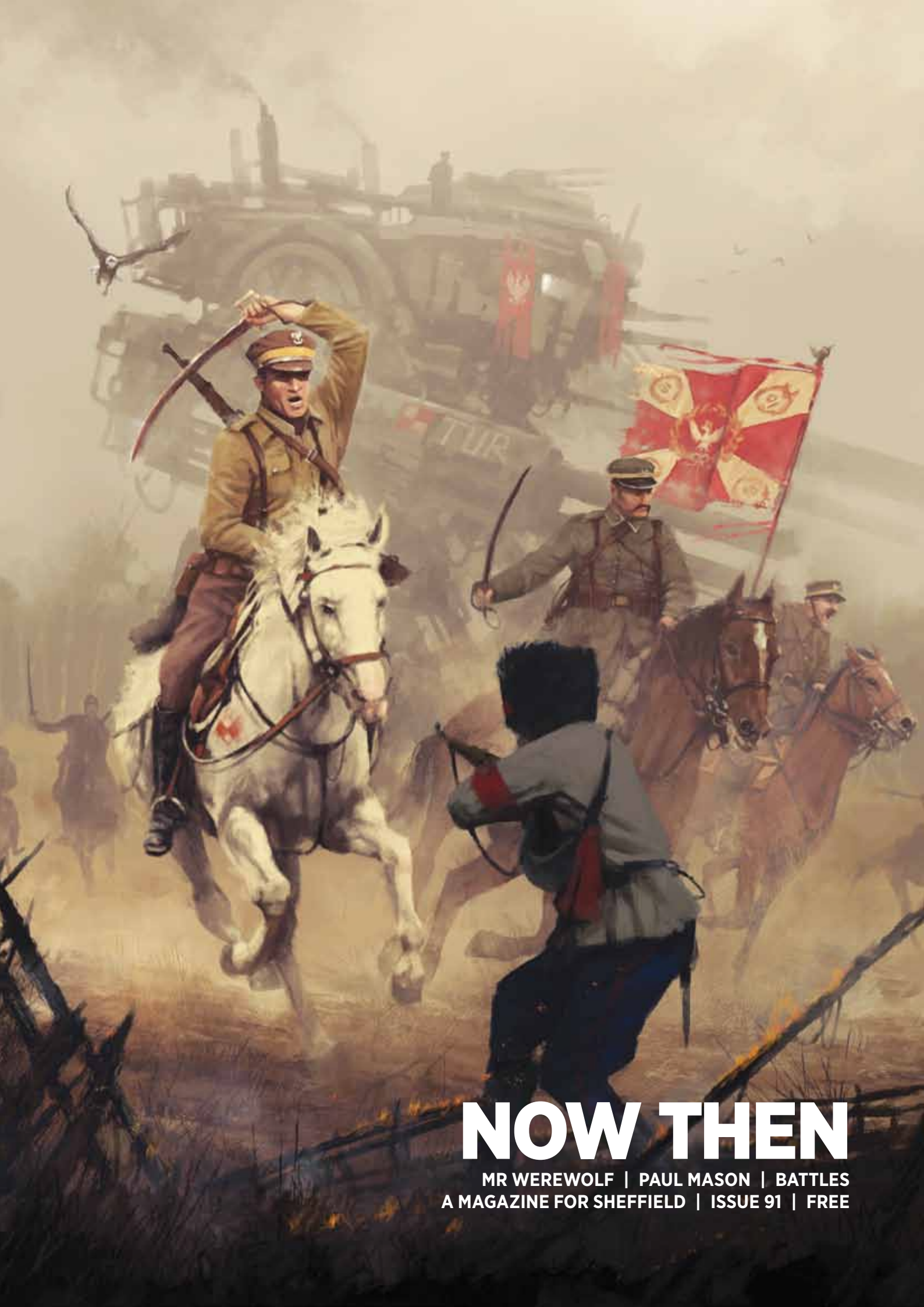




NOW THEN

MR WEREWOLF | PAUL MASON | BATTLES
A MAGAZINE FOR SHEFFIELD | ISSUE 91 | FREE



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EDITORIAL

Last month's mag was picked up at an incredible rate, probably due to the combination of Jo Peel's artwork and our interview with Jeremy Corbyn. I hope you enjoyed it.

It's a tough act to follow, but we've got another stellar issue this month - interviews with writer and broadcaster Paul Mason and spiky rock trio Battles, plenty of info on Off The Shelf Festival of Words, which runs for the whole of October and into November, and a great piece from Nigel Slack about Sheffield Retail Quarter. Did you know that Sheffield City Council currently owns a large portion of the city centre for the first time in god knows how long? Read on for more on that.

Independent artists, traders, campaigners, doers - we want to hear from you. Get in touch.

SAM

sam@nowthenmagazine.com

Our world is increasingly unequal, characterised by apathy, disconnection and the interests of the few. We can do better.

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LOCALCHECK

WELCOME TO SHEFFIELD

.....

When you meet refugees, it's not good to ask too much about their family and home. That kind of talk takes time, trust and confidence. Instead, keeping the conversation light, you might ask how they like it here. The answer is usually positive - Sheffield's great, most people are very welcoming, this feels like home. Except, of course, that you can see into their wistful smiles: thoughts of another home.

Among the world's billions of people, some have always left their homeland, for multiple reasons, and especially nowadays. Trying to understand the truth of this massively complex situation is hard. Even expressing a point of view beyond the most simplistic slogan quickly crosses the borders of most people's knowledge, drowned in the dirty waters of tabloid slurs.

This refugee crisis is the worst since the Second World War, according to Jim Steinke, head of the Sheffield-based Northern Refugee Centre (NRC), interviewed recently on Sheffield Live TV. NRC helps refugees to start new lives and escape from the traumas of their past. The endless cuts mean that it is desperately short of funds, so they've had to launch an appeal to raise £100,000 from the public. Please visit their website if you can help. Another example of people responding to crisis is the collection of donations to be sent to refugees in Calais at Theatre Delicatessen on the Moor (Thursday to Saturday, 11-4pm). It's not just money. They send anything useful.

You can make a real contribution simply by speaking English. Conversation Club runs regular afternoons in the city centre. These are informal and really useful for people who need to practise their English. For volunteers there, developing a friendship based on understanding with people from other parts of the world is one of the joys of this kind of activity. Learn for Life Enterprise on London Road is a similarly great, lively organisation which welcomes volunteers to assist with teaching English and various activities. For those who aren't ready to attend

classes, Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English (SAVTE) trains volunteers to teach English to the most isolated people, providing life-changing language skills and self-confidence.

The most fundamental human needs of food and companionship are being dished out with love by the Open Kitchen Social Club. This opens its doors every Monday, 11am-3pm, at St Andrew's Church Hall on Upper Hanover Way, as a place to meet for all in need, including asylum seekers and refugees. Food is free of charge to those with no income, while voluntary donations are requested from anyone else.

There isn't space here to ask the wider questions, like what people should do if their home has been destroyed, or why the Government isn't encouraging cross-border friendships and cultural exchange. Britain had no immigration controls before 1905. Do we absolutely need borders? Is it really a crisis or a manufactured moral panic? Instead, many Sheffield people and organisations are rightly concentrating on helping migrants. When we see suffering, the politics don't matter so much. People just want to do something. It's a human reaction. On a personal level, this really counts. If you haven't already, why not help? Why not open your life to another perspective?

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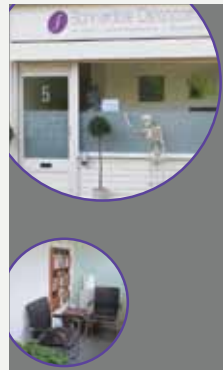
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Access Space, the unconventional gallery on 'Art Street', is now accepting artworks for the annual free 20x20 exhibition. Everyone is welcome to display a 20 by 20-inch picture. Pre-prepared boards are available or you can make your own. Exhibition runs 13 November to 17 December.
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LABOUR

CHANGE BEYOND CORBYN

.....

When Jeremy Corbyn squeaked onto Labour's leadership ballot, he was a 100-1 outsider. Nobody expected him to win, least of all a demoralised, fragmented and weak Left. While his victory is a huge boost, the odds in the war ahead remain stacked against both him and us.

This is not defeatism, but a necessary starting point for developing any effective strategy. That strategy - clumsy and error-ridden as it will inevitably be - must nonetheless be based on expectations of lengthy and patient engagement, rather than on any illusions of a power which Corbyn's win, in and of itself, does little to increase.

More specifically, if his support base is to develop resilience, it must create its own capacity to organise, communicate and act. The nascent popular agency which has been evident in recent months at rallies and meetings must consolidate itself into a genuine social movement, supportive of, but not dependent on, a Corbyn-led Labour.

In parallel, he faces the challenge of transforming the Labour Party into an entirely different type of institution; not an electoral machine, but a catalyst and focus for self-organising campaigns which both work within and transcend its boundaries. If both these things can be done, they may energise one another to a degree which surprises us all.

But each aspect of this strategy faces serious obstacles. Only if Corbyn's election gives his supporters greater confidence to conduct their own struggles in workplaces, over housing and against all forms of discrimination, can we start talking about a significant and lasting realignment in British politics which is able to resist the inevitable counter-attack.

Secondly, in transforming Labour into an organisation capable of working with such popular movements, Corbyn faces a huge task. In no way does this involve reclaiming the party via a return to Old Labour values. Labour never has been, and has never wanted to be, the kind of institution which is now required.

On the contrary, whether under Tony Blair or Clement Attlee, at the heart of labourism has been a belief that change comes incrementally, through expert guidance, governmental institutions and national, cross-class consent, not as a rupture driven by popular mobilisation or class conflict. Labour's fetishisation of parliamentary democracy and lack of theorisation of the economic power that always circumscribes such political power has meant that not only has the party always been afraid of taking on elite capitalist interests, but much more importantly has never believed in the need to do so.

What terrifies Blair et al is not so much Corbyn's precise

policies as his willingness to embrace a political agency which goes beyond a paternalistic control of the party machinery. Labour must either disarm this agency or accept that it will push them into inevitable conflict with existing power structures, inside and outside the party.

In this regard, Corbyn's rhetoric of Labour being a "broad church" and his emphasis on unity are acknowledgements of his own weakness. In another significant sign of compromise, he has already ruled out giving ultimate control over the selection and recall of MPs to the grassroots. The right wing of Labour has always been ruthless in expelling individuals who threaten its vision. Sooner rather than later, the Left must do likewise.

Precisely such an inversion of hierarchy is needed if Labour is to be transformed into an organisation that builds people's independent capacities, engages with autonomous movements (perhaps through a new federative, affiliation structure), and eventually enters the state with both a transformative programme and the support of a radicalised and empowered social base.

As 2020 approaches, pressure to abandon this project will intensify as the logic of electoral politics re-asserts itself over the logic of social movements. The former requires a united party, the targeting of swing voters (thanks to first-past-the-post), and the appeasement of the powerful. The latter dictates intra-party conflict, the uncompromising demands of sectional interests and the acceptance that you can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs.

Inevitably, there will be a compromise between these contradictory logics. The shape of that compromise will be determined by the balance of class forces. That, in turn, depends less on what Corbyn and Labour can do for us, and more on what we can do for ourselves.

Duncan Thomas



Photos by David Holt



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Photo by Sara Hill

RETAIL QUARTER

SHOPPING HEAVEN OR HELL?

.....

We all know the heart of the city has been a sad sight for years now. Plans for regeneration came crashing down with the financial crisis of 2008. The scheme, led by major developer Hammerson, fell apart and the Council have now taken responsibility for the land within the city centre. After considerable delay, there was promise that a new vision for the area might be generated and that something would finally change.

There were many concerns and complaints about the original plans and their impact on the city centre's heritage buildings. These concerns remain and the Council's recent record on heritage sites has undermined a previously enviable reputation in protecting and preserving the city's history and heritage.

Despite a great record with locations like Manor Lodge,

Bishops House and the redevelopment of areas like Kelham Island, the demolition of part of the Jessop Hospital for the University and the approval of the demolition of the 200-year-old parade of shops on Devonshire Street has knocked the shine off the Council's previous efforts.

We now find ourselves in a very unusual position. The area identified for the new Retail Quarter runs from Barkers Pool to the top of the Moor and from Pinstone Street to Trafalgar Street. For the first time in who knows how long, a significant portion of the city centre is entirely owned by Sheffield City Council, bought using compulsory purchase orders for almost £500m. Is it then time to look for a different approach to redevelopment? Is top-down regeneration of our city centre the best solution? Some

people think so, others don't. Here are the contenders.

First, the Council's preferred option is a single developer strategy, headed by a major development partner delivering a complete scheme, from roads and buildings to new 'public' spaces such as squares, precincts and green spaces, strongly favouring major retail and with new office and residential space in the mix. Some heritage buildings are secure, but others, the lower end of Cambridge Street, are to be lost. John Lewis gets a new store near Charter Square and will anchor an extension of Fargate from there to the Town Hall.

Concerns aren't just about the demolition of buildings like Henry's and the loss of the iconic 60s modernism of John Lewis (or Cole Brothers to us in Sheffield), but the potential that heritage buildings could fall victim to 'façadism', retaining the exterior without any internal respect for it. A single developer might also tend toward a uniform design aesthetic, where anything above the shop front is bland and uninspiring. The tendency that city centres begin to resemble each other is natural for developers with an eye to profit.

The main competitors as the Council's development partner have now been announced, but the final decision is delayed for six months. Two of them have strong heritage projects in their backgrounds. It's possible that, with the right developer, heritage buildings in the city may be respected, but would they win out over big profit?

Second, we have plans put forward by the Sheffield Retail Development Group (SRDG), led by local businessman, John Crowther. This proposal is similar to the Council's in scale and

neighbourhoods.

As an individual, Rupert may be expected to have little chance with his proposition for a better city, but he is doing the work. He's sought views from a wide range of stakeholders, architects, local designers and city centre residents. He's also voicing concerns about the dangers of another crash on a major developer and the chances of another Hammerson debacle.

Could a scaled approach of smaller developers working on portions of the scheme work? Perhaps this idea's time has come.

The reason I say this is less to do with the schemes themselves and more with the impact of the schemes on the city. The two main proposals for the Retail Quarter are heavily reliant on strong consumer demand and resulting strong demand for unit space. There is considerable doubt about this. Filled with shiny new stores at higher rents than currently achievable, the quarter could lead to a divisive split in how people shop. Shops inside the Retail Quarter for people with money and shops outside it catering for those with little or no disposable income.

Then there's the ongoing downturn in retail. August saw the worst retail performance on the high street since 2008, four consecutive months where sales have fallen. The new scheme might end up with as many empty stores as today.

There are other impacts of these schemes too. I mentioned earlier that in preparation for this redevelopment the city centre now belongs to the Council. Two schemes rely on returning this land to private hands. This has consequences. Public land operates under the law and local bylaws, but can be used freely by the public without other restrictions. If this land becomes private - as

“IS TOP-DOWN REGENERATION OF OUR CITY CENTRE THE BEST SOLUTION?”

method of delivery, but emphasises retention of heritage buildings within the redevelopment area, particularly Cambridge Street and John Lewis, and the creation of new cultural venues, such as cinemas and an “arts centre/symphony hall”. It's their intention that this should be solely “market funded” and no risk to the local treasury.

Many are keen to see the retention of the current street plan and an emphasis on saving the older buildings, enhanced by the attractive proposition of a new cultural venue or two within the city centre. SRDG say this proposal is fully funded and that partners are in place to deliver the scheme, but their reticence in giving detail has left many uncertain. Their architects, Chapman Taylor (Shanghai, Qatar and Trinity Leeds), have a penchant for large, net-like street roofing and are hardcore modernists, so fears for the internal layout of heritage buildings may still be relevant.

Finally, there is the proposition considered the outsider in this story - a view from Rupert Wood, local entrepreneur (APG Gallery) and, unusually in these discussions, a city centre resident. Rupert wants a plan that recognises that successful cities are the product of organic growth and slower development, favouring an incremental approach that would enable smaller development opportunities ideal for local developers and architects to respond to imaginatively. He also proposes that community land trusts - non-profit corporations that develop and steward community assets on our behalf - be used to secure ownership of certain heritage properties and preserve them for the city, making Sheffield distinct from other cities - a living, real city of active

with the squares at the back of the St Paul's Tower near the Peace Gardens, for example - the owner can impose restrictions on our free use of that land - restrictions on the right to protest, skate-board, busk or anything considered 'anti-social'. At the corner by Cafe Rouge, there is a small plaque in the pavement that tells you so - not that many people have noticed it, never mind read it.

My experience of private companies delivering public services has taught me that such use removes the right of the public to transparency and democratic accountability. Do we want the roads, pavements and squares of the Retail Quarter to be private spaces, where we are only allowed if we conform to the right behaviours?

There's a lot to think about, but the difference between the schemes highlights one fundamental question: can a plan founded on a top-down, retail-based regeneration give us the city centre we want? What do you think?

Nigel Slack, Active Citizen
@SheffCityNigel

Rupert Wood Plan:
apgworks.co.uk/sheffield_city_centre.html

Council Plan - sheffieldretailquarter.com
SRDG Plan - sheffieldshines.com

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PAUL MASON

ON POSTCAPITALISM

.....

Broadcaster and journalist Paul Mason released his new book, *Postcapitalism: A Guide To Our Future*, back in July, the message of which has only become more relevant in recent weeks following the climax of global humanitarian outcry.

The preeminent Channel 4 economics editor offers a refreshingly thoughtful insight into the utopian ideals proposed by the notion of ‘postcapitalism’, a world with a brand new socio-economic system emerging from the sodden ashes of capitalism. Mason’s postcapitalism is bidding for a new era of change towards an eventually equal and fair society with information technology fixed firmly at its heart.

For readers who haven’t read the book, why do you believe the

end of capitalism has already begun?

Information technology is starting to erode the basic mechanisms of capitalism. Prices fall to zero when you can copy and paste. Wages and work are becoming de-linked, new collaborative forms of production are appearing that can only work if nobody owns the product, and where stuff is being produced for free or for sharing.

You talk about an appetite for radical change amongst the populous. What world events in recent years do you think have contributed to this and how did they feed into your theory of postcapitalism?

The protests that began in 2011 – Occupy, The Arab Spring, [Spanish anti-austerity movement] the Indignados – had common

features: they were inspired and fought for by people with individualist agendas. They came together via networks and they lived a networked lifestyle. They had an expanded sense of the possible, and refused to let hierarchical norms stand in their way. Sometimes, like in Gezi Park, Istanbul, in 2013, they spontaneously tried to create in reality the kind of sharing economy they were able to build online. A tent camp is just an online ideal community projected into real space.

Socialising the financial system is one of the four ‘victory conditions’ you set for postcapitalism. What would a socialised financial system look like and what would be the key elements in the transition towards it?

It would be a mixed economy – some credit unions, some ethical banks such as exist in Italy and Spain, some regional savings banks, a state savings bank like the old Post Office Bank, and some privately or corporately owned banks, like the present ones but broken up on regional lines to allow regional mobilisation of savings.

Any global banks engaged in speculative finance would only exist within strict regulations that meant if they failed their investors would go bust first, and the moment a bank became big enough to crash the economy by failing it would get broken up or regulated back into a safe space.

The transitional measures are not all regulation. We could simply copy and paste the kind of ethical banks pioneered in Italy or grow the existing credit union sector. But ultimately, you’re going to need a redesign of the system and – to use a computing metaphor – a reset.

society. How do we move towards a society which doesn’t value work as a virtue in and of itself?

It will take a long time for all work to become voluntary. Right now voluntary collaborations such as those that produce Wikipedia are done in people’s free time. But we could expand free time and see what happens. My guess is more things like Wikipedia spring up – more communal crèches, more self-managed enterprises.

Bernie Sanders in the US, Podemos in Spain, Corbyn in the UK – could they change the system from within or are they rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic?

They’re all old-style left wingers or socialists, with the exception of Podemos, which grew straight out of an anarchistic, autonomist and feminist protest movement. I absolutely think these movements – but also mainstream liberal and conservative parties – can do things that progress the project towards minimal work, loads of free stuff and a sustainable energy system. I think the Left will get it earlier than the Right, but the precondition is to stop reenacting the conflicts of the 20th century.

Capitalism has a view of human nature as survivalist. How could postcapitalism redefine our view of human nature?

We’re halfway there, because the neoliberal view of humanity was always bullshit. We were never the kind of ‘hate everybody and please yourself’ characters Ayn Rand says we are. However, what postcapitalism does as a concept is give us permission to view our charitable, sharing, sustainable selves as elements of a new human archetype, a new kind of person. It’s the technology that is creating the ‘multiple self’, the person with different identities in different parts of reality, but it has also begun to educate us

.....

“THE NEOLIBERAL VIEW OF HUMANITY WAS ALWAYS BULLSHIT”

.....

Which existing projects or groups do you feel best embody your view of how a postcapitalist society would look?

We’re not at that stage. The stage we’re at is mapping the non-capitalist, collaborative and ‘solidarity’ economies, literally creating a user-generated map of every project – community garden, parallel currency, workers’ co-op. A postcapitalist transition begins by recognising this as a sector and then growing it.

Which industries do you see being affected by automation and disruptive technologies next?

47% of all jobs, according to the Oxford Martin Institute, could be automated. So all industries, including many of the service industries we’ve built that rely on low skill. How would you replace housepainters, people ask me? Well, how many people have a job painting the outside of the Gherkin in London? None. Its design means it will never be painted. Apply that principle to cleaning jobs, baristas, etc.

How can readers encourage the transition to a postcapitalist society? What technologies can they use to disrupt existing hierarchies?

The most basic technology is the one car workers use when they do ‘total quality management’ – the whiteboard. If we sat around every morning, as they do at Nissan, and asked, “What are we doing wrong and how can we work as a team to improve things?” – only this time not about a production line, but a society – that’s what we need. That’s why I quote a Soviet era economist, calling it “social technology”.

Work would ultimately be voluntary only in a postcapitalist

about the merits of sharing.

You’re currently producing *And Dreams Shall Take Revenge*, a documentary following the story of Syriza’s grassroots. What compelled you to get involved in this project?

I knew I couldn’t tell the whole story in two-minute news pieces. I knew there would be an almighty clash with the Euro elite. I had to hope I would get my cameras on the inside to tell that story and, with [director] Theopi [Skarlatos] in the lead, that’s what the team did. We’re hoping to get it broadcast or distributed before the end of 2015.

You studied Music and Politics in Sheffield during the late 70s and early 80s. Has music played an important role in your political insights?

Music – I mean the classical music I studied – taught me above all: no act of imagination is futile. Music is the imagination running wild, through a landscape that is only colour and emotion. Its mere existence refutes the demand of the neoliberals for us to be acquisitive, selfish individuals.

Ebony Nembhard

Paul Mason will give a talk on *The Economics of Hope* at Sheffield Students’ Union on 10 October, 5-6pm, as part of Off The Shelf Festival of Words – offtheshelf.org.uk



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FOOD

EAT SHEFFIELD AWARDS

.....

The Eat Sheffield Awards were established eight years ago to promote independent food businesses in the region. Over the years, the Awards have grown from a small project into an annual celebration of our local food industry. Past winners include Our Cow Molly, Tamper, Beeches of Walkley, The Broadfield and Sakushi.

Winning an award is recognition of passion and hard work and can lead to bigger things. The categories cover the breadth of food in the city, from Asian and modern British to gastro pub and retailers, with public nomination categories for newcomers, food-based events and inspirational community food projects. Names making the shortlist this year include The Old House, Blue Moon Café, Percy & Lily's, Rafter's, Yee Kwan Ice Cream and Ink & Water. The finalists have been announced and the

winners will be crowned at a ceremony taking place later this month.

There is certainly a lot to celebrate as the Sheffield food scene continues to grow. As Niki Baker, Head of Eat Sheffield, rightly points out: "We have an excellent café (and coffee) culture, expertise within the drinks sector, including microbreweries and gin, alongside innovative mixology and cocktail offerings, dedicated single product venues and small plate offers. Street food is growing steadily and we have a number of innovative markets."

To showcase some of the city's interesting and innovative independents, here's a spotlight on four Eat Sheffield nominees. Look out for the announcement of the winners and details of the young chef, bartender and barista competitions.

Ros Arksey @Nibbly_Pig

"THE SHEFFIELD FOOD SCENE CONTINUES TO GROW"



eatsheffield.com/awards | Photo by India Hobson



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Housed in the former 1920s ballroom and billiard hall of the Abbeydale Picture House, Picture House Social serve up creative cocktails, craft beer and sumptuous Italian food, plus they have ping pong tables. Run by the same people behind the Great Gatsby, expect to enjoy good food and a relaxed vibe.

Manager Joe said: "To be nominated feels very pleasant. It's always nice to get a little pat on the back. The last year has whizzed by unnervingly quickly. We've gradually learnt more and become so nerdy about pizza that I think our friends are bored of us now."

Favourite food places: Zeugma, Bragazzis, Forge Bakehouse, Shy Boy Cantina, Thyme Cafe, Top Thai.



HIDDEN GEM CAFE

FOLKWOOD GROVE
[HIDDENGEMCAFE.CO.UK](http://hiddengemcafe.co.uk)

Based behind Bents Green school off Ringinglow Road, Hidden Gem Cafe is run by Work Ltd, a local charity providing work experience to people with learning difficulties. They offer homemade dishes which make the most of local and seasonal ingredients.

Sarah said: "We are so proud to have been nominated. This in itself is a huge achievement. The last year has been extremely busy and we can't believe the increased footfall that we have had in such a short space of time. The highlight for us is the amount of people that are spreading the word and putting our wonderful charity, cafe and bijoux gift shop on the map."

Favourite food places: Peppercorns, Smith & Baker, Forge Bakehouse.



PORTER BROOK DELI

354 SHARROW VALE ROAD
[PORTERBROOKDELI.CO.UK](http://porterbrookdeli.co.uk)

Porter Brook Deli is an Aladdin's cave offering goodies including olives, cured meats and a fantastic cheese counter stocking over 50 cheeses. It's run by enthusiastic husband and wife team Nick and Nicky, who are only too happy to chat food and offer advice.

Nick said: "It is lovely to be nominated for an award. I hope it means we are doing something right. I can't believe we have been open for over two years now. We have learnt a lot from listening to what customers tell you about what they are cooking or where they have visited. We're now selling some great cheeses and relatively unknown ones made by small-scale producers."

Favourite food places: Ashoka, Sebastian's, Seven Hills Bakery, Made by Jonty's, Homemade by Thelma's.



BIA COMIDA AT DOG & PARTRIDGE

56 TRIPPET LANE
[BIACOMIDA.COM](http://biacomida.com)

Bia Comida run the kitchen at the Dog & Partridge. The menu offers pub classics alongside Spanish-influenced tapas, including paella and empanadillas. Enjoy a beer or two and sunshine food in a cosy Irish pub.

Chef Jimmy said: "It is very exciting to be nominated. The last year has been great. We had been open for one year in May, so that was a real milestone for us. The tapas has been really successful and what is particularly satisfying now is that I can get out of the kitchen and talk to people about the menu. A lot of the regulars know they can ask me for certain things and I know how they like it, so that's really fun."

Favourite food places: Vero Gusto, Craft & Dough.



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WORDLIFE

HOSTED BY JOE KRISS

.....

October is one of our favourite months of year, with Off The Shelf Festival of Words popping up across the city with its huge selection of workshops, events and readings.

There's great stuff happening, like **Ideas Alive at 5:45** (12-27 October), where University of Sheffield academics hold free talks at the Showroom exploring everything from ageing to sibling relationships and migration. **Michael Rosen**, one of the UK's best loved poets, is also performing on 21 October at the University and there's even literary speed dating on 16 and 22 October at Graves Gallery.

It's an eclectic festival which is far too broad to give its full shape here. All the poems in this issue are taken from poets who are featuring at the festival too. You can find the full line-up online or in the festival brochures across the city. Our events as part of the festival are listed below.

Joe

.....

OPENING EVENT

10 October | 11am-5pm | Winter Garden | Free

We're launching the festival with a full day event at the Winter Garden. Open mic, bookswap, poetry films, acoustic music performances and lots more.

POETRY LIGHT NIGHT

16 October | 7-9:30pm | Upper Chapel | Free

We're running a major new commission this year with the creation of two original poems by award-winning poets Rommi Smith and Tony Walsh, which have been turned into poem films by BAFTA-nominated filmmakers and will be projected onto the frontage of Upper Chapel. Rommi and Tony will perform at 8pm.

LITERATURE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH YORKSHIRE

23 October | 7:30-9:30pm | Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham | FREE

Along with various partners, we're hosting four events across South Yorkshire on one evening. Join us and raise a glass to the Literature Republic of South Yorkshire. Go to wordlife.co.uk for more info.

OFF THE SHELF PARTY

30 October | 7:30pm | Theatre Deli | £5

We're holding the biggest poetry slam in South Yorkshire at Theatre Deli for local poets to slug it out for the title of Off The Shelf Slam Champion 2015. Also featuring Doncaster poet Sally Jenkinson and Mancunian Mike Garry, whose poetic/musical tribute to Tony Wilson recently climbed the charts and went viral.

All of Half Way

i.m. Sue Ridley

As I was going to Coleraine
a man in Bewleys said to me
I wouldn't wear that green cap up there
if I was you, and I snatched it off –

colours aren't yet mortal in Australia.
It was only our equestrian team cap
that you had given me, but I took
the warning, folded, to Coleraine.

There I found hospitality
and Bushmills and the Giant's Causeway.
No bush near the Mills
but a coracle sea and the Giant's columns

massing on out, a basalt grandstand
of rain-cup pillars, crimped like Rubiks
from cooling out of their rock floor
all of half way from America.

Les Murray

One of the leading Australian poets, who has received numerous awards including the T.S Eliot Prize and the Queen's Medal for Poetry, Les will appear on 12 October at Sheffield Students' Union, 7.30pm.

The Twelve Yorkshire Days of Christmas

On the first day of Yorkshire Christmas my true love gave to me
A tinsel muffler to put round me tree.
On the second
2 racing pigeons
3 nippy whippets
4 flat caps
5 Dickie Birds
6 Grandmas grumbling
7 Grandads snoring
8 Banghra Dancers
9 parkin makers
10 Bowls full of Yorkshire pudding batter
11 Football teams struggling in the lower divisions
12 Michael Parkinson Blow Up Dolls

Ian McMillan

One of Yorkshire's favourite sons, Ian will be discussing his latest project, **Neither Nowt nor Summat – In Search of the Meaning of Yorkshire**, on 1 October at Sheffield City Hall, 6pm.

Touching a Jackson Pollock

The Metropolitan Museum of Art: 2009

In New York they let you get real close
to the paintings. You can near enough
smell the resins, like the oil's still wet,
and the man with paint on his boots
has just stepped away, wiping his hands.

My brother hangs back, needs a break,
his inhaler, a drink.

In the museum cafe,
where just beyond the plate glass wall
a vagrant in the park strips to his shorts,
pours water over his head and chest,
I chatter about his painting –
how he'd have his canvas hard down
on the ground, come at it from all sides,
the dance of it, repeated steps, the arc
and sweep, fractals of splatters and trails,
that out of chaos, patterns emerged.

My brother orders another drink.
Outside a cop deals with the naked man.

Back in the gallery, we're looking close,
so near the guard warns, *step back ma'am*.
Set in the layers of flung paint, a bottle top,
cigarette butt, broken glass. The guard
turns away. My brother reaches out.

Ann Atkinson

Ann, who died in 2012, was the Derbyshire Poet Laureate and a much loved figure on the national writing scene. Her **Collected Poems** is being launched on 17 October at Channing Hall, 7.30pm.



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OCTOBER LISTINGS

- Fri 9.** Modern Life Is Rubbish - Friends of Alec Syphas Charity Special. 8pm. £4 otd
- Sat 10.** The King Bee Rhythm & Blues Club. £4otd.
- Thu 15.** Shakespeares 1st Gin Festival. 50 gins & Meet the Distiller Sessions. (Thursday 15. - Sunday 18.)
- Sat 17.** Opus Presents Gadabout: Steven James Adams £7adv / £10otd
- Thu 22.** WagonWheel Presents: M.G. Boulter & Garforth & Myers & Arcana Valley. £6 Adv.
- Fri 23.** Word Life Poetry Night & Slam 7pm. £tbc
- Sat 24.** JD Meatyard Poetic Heartache in Rock Music Form. 8pm. £tbc
- Sat 31.** WagonWheel Presents: Case Hardin + Dennis Ellsworth + E.R. Thorpe. £6 Adv.

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COOL BEANS



Memories of Watford Gap

HAVING FUN

Dear Advice Arnold,

You may not remember, but I met you at an acid house free party in the Peak District circa '95. It was definitely you as there were only three people in attendance and the other guy was Greg Wallace from Masterchef (you know, that programme about food and public shaming).

Anyway, since getting married and having three kids, I've struggled to have fun like we used to back in the 90s. How can I let my hair down without leaving my husband and kids long enough that they get trapped in the bathroom?

Sandra, Rotherham (the posh bit)

Greetings Sandra,

Most of my memories from July '93 through to September '97 were eradicated by an unhealthy Pritt Stick habit, so I have no idea whether you are speaking the truth or not. I'm going to play it safe and assume you're lying.

Getting older and developing family responsibilities can sap some of the life of a person. No one here is denying this - least of all my parents - but don't let your dependants completely strip you of all your happiness. Here are a few things you can do to invigorate your pleasure cells without resulting in the entrapment of your loved ones: meet up with a friend for coffee and/or vodka, troll a celebrity online, find some road kill and throw it at an old person, eat some raw chicken, or - my personal favourite - travel to Watford Gap service station and reminisce about your youth.

If any of those suggestions don't quite do it for you, you could try ordering Sky TV, then cancelling it within 24 hours of ordering it, then ordering it again, and then cancelling it one more time. That should do the trick.

Good luck with your life, Sandra. Please don't contact me again.

Advice Arnold @chrisarnoldinc

WINE NOTES #1

Alcohol: Yes

Colour: Dehydration piss green

Nose: Gerard Depardieu

Body: Head of a desperate jellyfish, hind legs of an emotionally distant mule and the abdomen of a lonesome antelope on a stag do in Blackpool with friends they normally try to avoid.

Flavour: A strangled sonnet stabbed into mud. An attempt at light, flowery notes, but ultimately a mess.

Throat sting: Unpleasant but necessary.

Finish: Yes, but I wish I hadn't.

Drinkability: At what point does a cheap bottle of wine become an expensive bottle of bleach?

Cost effectiveness: Almost perfect, barring the fact that it wasn't alcoholic enough or cheap enough.

General thoughts: What it doesn't have in flavour, quality, body, head, shoulders, knees and toes, it more than makes up for in appropriate chemical state, being as it is liquid, and not a gas or solid. For that much, it should be applauded. I would consider buying this bottle again, but perhaps only to use as an unopened house prop to signify to visitors that I have restraint and taste, and don't actually need to drink every drop of alcohol within arm's reach.

Chris Delamere
@spinetrolley

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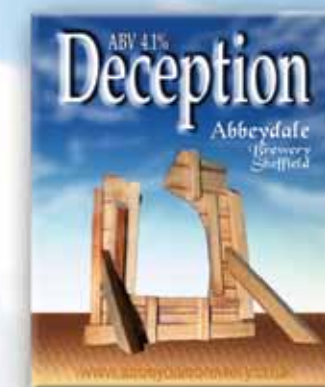


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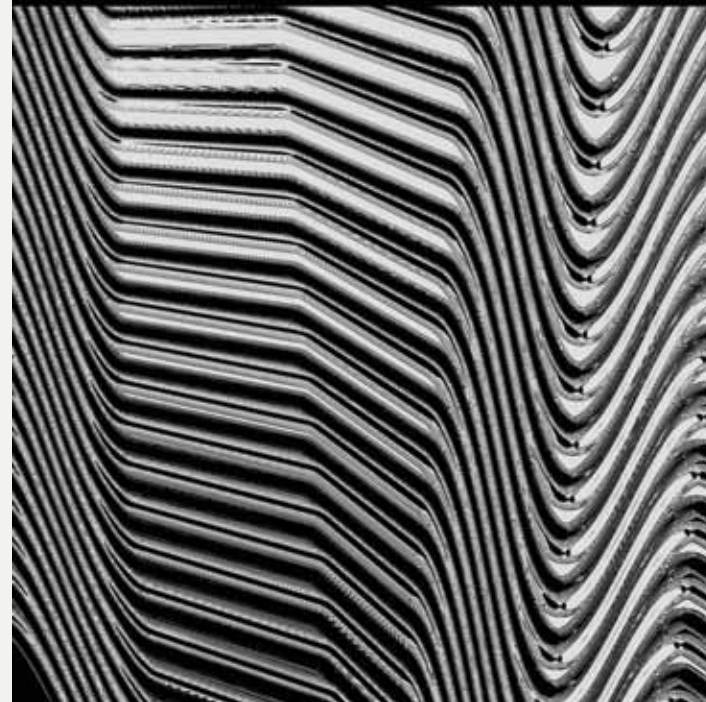
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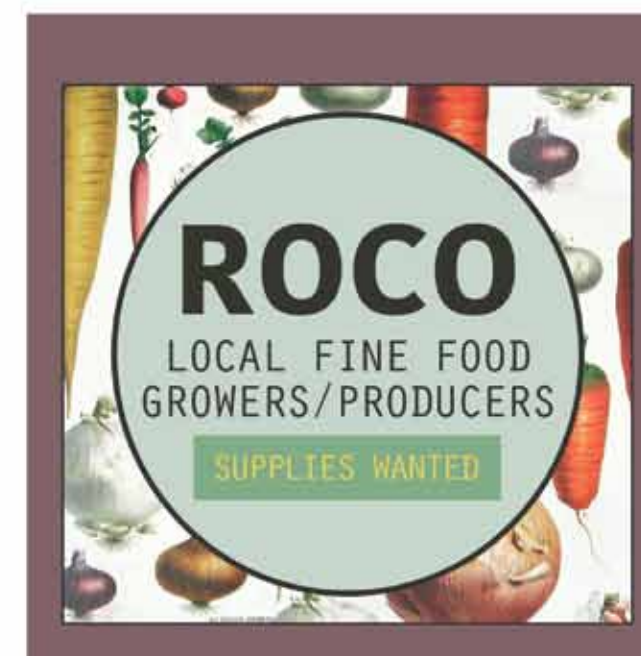
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MR WEREWOLF

IMAGINED HISTORIES

.....

Jakub Rozalski's art is a curious mixture of traditional and futuristic. His 1920+ series, shown throughout this issue, explores an alternate history which sees Polish farmers pitted against Red Army mechs in the lead-up to the (real-life) Battle of Warsaw. At the same time, his paintings achieve seemingly traditional, classical results but are mostly produced digitally.

With a board game in the works based on Jakub's imagined world, we caught up with the Kraków-based artist to learn more.

What is your earliest memory of creating art?

I remember that when I was about ten, I used to take a few sheets of paper, glue them together and draw hundreds of knights and dragons in enormous panoramic battles.

1920 was an important year for Poland, with the Polish defeating the invading Red Army at the Battle of Warsaw. Was this battle the starting point for the history-fiction of the 1920+ series?

and civilisation. I want to show war from the perspective of normal people, not so epic and bombastic.

This same combination of traditional and modern can be seen in your approach to art. What tools and techniques do you use?

I work mostly digitally on tablet, but every now and then I miss canvas and paint and I go back to traditional painting. For many years I experimented with styles and techniques and at the moment I think I can say that this mix of impressionism and naturalism suits me the most. For me, the most important thing in my work is to always create a unique atmosphere by telling some kind of story, showing everyday situations in an unusual environment. I like the more subdued, discreet colours, as well as more static compositions.

The 1920+ art is being used for a new board game called Scythe, which is being crowdfunded starting this month. How did you get involved with this project?

A year ago, Jamey Stegmaier from Stonemaier Games saw my

“THE WORLD FORGETS TOO QUICKLY & HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF”

Yes, exactly. History is my great passion and has always interested me. Poland, only two years after regaining independence, stopped the Bolshevik Revolution and saved Europe from Communism. Unfortunately, we paid a very high price for that a few years later during World War II and the Soviet occupation. For this project I'm combining the classic motifs of cavalry, daily life in the countryside and Polish painting of the late 19th and early 20th century, and adding some of my own concepts and ideas.

There's a spirit of independence in the pieces. Is Poland still the underdog or are the pieces more about how technology is changing the world as a whole?

There is something of both topics in my paintings. We should remember history, learn from it and draw conclusions, but the world forgets too quickly and history repeats itself. Certainly, the geopolitical position of Poland was never favourable. Looking at what is happening in Ukraine, which is only a few hundred kilometres from Kraków, where I live, I think this situation remains a serious concern.

I think there is also in my paintings some longing for a life closer to nature which has been aggressively taken by technology

paintings. He liked them and the world I created so much that he decided to write to me with a proposal to create a board game.

I'm a fan of games and I know that Stonemaier Games attach great importance to quality and details, so I gladly agreed. Along with the game, we also plan to release an artbook with all my paintings and concepts from the 1920+ universe. I can't wait for 13 October.

What are your plans for the rest of 2015?

Various exhibitions, propositions, perhaps a television series based on my 1920+ series and Scythe. The most important for me, at this point, is the board game. I hope it will be a great success, and then my paintings and the world I created will land on the tables of players around the world.

Sam Walby

jakubsan.tumblr.com | stonemaiergames.com





the public reviews
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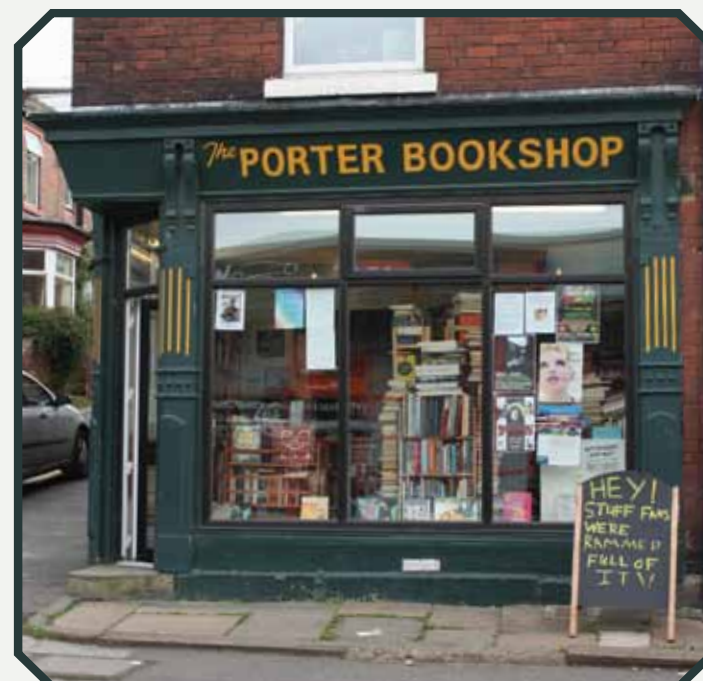
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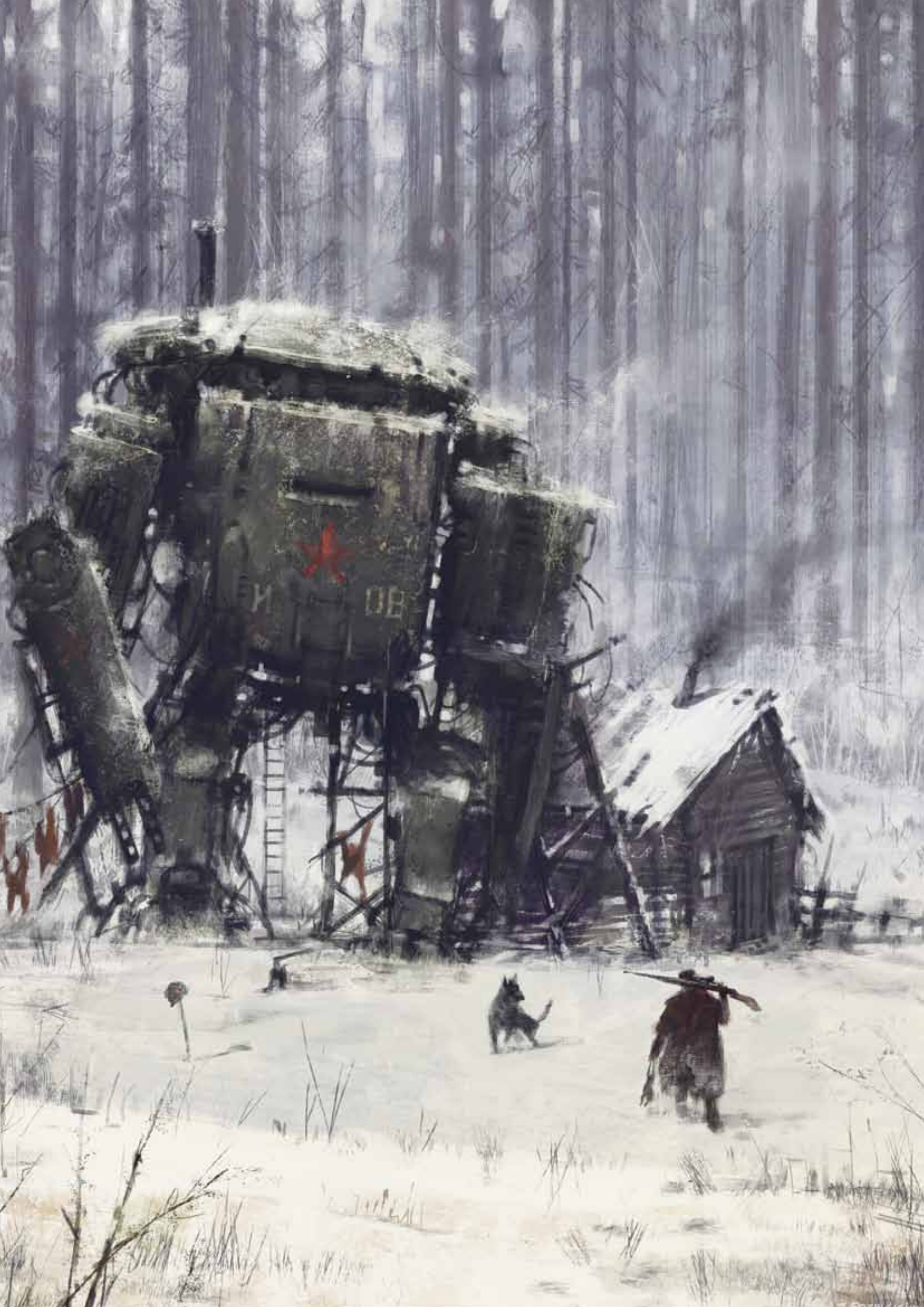
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SOUND

THE ART OF GETTING BY

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There's a scene in *Family Guy*, that cultural behemoth of our times, where Peter Griffin addresses the camera directly in a TV segment he's hosting called *What Really Grinds My Gears*. On this occasion, the issue is Lindsay Lohan's sexualised body: "You're out there jumping around, and I'm just sitting here with my beer. So, what am I supposed to do? What do you want? Are we gonna go out?" Peter's frustration isn't caused by what's being projected out to him; it's working out what he's supposed to do with something he can't touch or affect in any way.

Watching Sufjan Stevens perform **Carrie & Lowell** in its entirety at Bristol's Colston Hall last month, I found myself wondering what we're supposed to do with the album and, by extension, the performance. It's a wonderful record, and it's obviously been hugely therapeutic for Stevens, but what about the audience? What are we getting out of this?

One reviewer compared the live experience to watching the first ten minutes of Disney Pixar's **Up** – a kind of collective grief

quiet, simple guitar and piano melodies, which makes sense to our brains and therefore adds a level of cohesive pleasure.

We hear sad music, hear sad words, and therefore, if the art is well-crafted, we feel sad too. When the tones clash, such as the lyrics to Slipknot's 'People = Shit' set to Richard Cheese's lounge piano, it can produce hilarity. Sometimes, it can be even more poignant. Emmy the Great's 'We Almost Had a Baby' springs to mind, that tale of rape set to a lilting country melody which somehow renders the song's delivery even more devastating.

Why put yourself through that? Perhaps because we need to practice grief and acceptance safely, in a controlled environment, like horror movie buffs who experience the adrenaline rush of an axe murderer on the loose without sustaining any nasty gashes themselves. These sessions also bring us out of our present lives a little, where we can look at the pasts of others, and contemplate our own through the relics they left behind.

When Roland Barthes wrote his masterpiece, **Camera Lucida**,

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“WHAT ARE WE GETTING OUT OF THIS?”

.....

porn, where paying punters turn up expecting a cathartic experience and, sure enough, leave with their pockets stuffed full of wet tissues. But when he breaks into a soft falsetto to deliver the line, "I just want to be near you," are we basking in the man's grief for his deceased mother or choked up by a reminder of our own mortality?

Of course, the question is reductive because we cannot do one without the other. When we hear a cry of anguish, it's human nature to feel a pang of our own, to recognise the horror of emotional as well as physical torment in another, even one not belonging to our own species. Similarly, we can experience terror watching a horror movie despite being perfectly safe, when the actions are clearly happening to someone else, an actor who is actually perfectly safe themselves. But the sound is enough. We hear an echo of our own tribulations in those howls and we refer to people who cannot as psychopaths.

Music is a rarefied form in this arena, as it allows us to experience profound emotions without ever being exposed to the referent. We don't see or hear heartbreak, but often find it signposted by melody alone, while lyrics steer the listener further. In the case of *Carrie & Lowell*, the language of loss is matched to

it was also in an attempt to discover his deceased mother through the documented past of photographs. "The photograph," he wrote, "is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there, proceed radiations which ultimately touch me, who am here; the duration of the transmission is insignificant; the photograph of the missing being, as Sontag says, will touch me like the delayed rays of a star."

And that is ultimately all that we can do with grief - to allow it to touch us, while accepting that we can never reach back.

Matthew Neale

LIVE

.....

HOUNDSTOOTH

10 SEPTEMBER
YELLOW ARCH

Tonight's gig at Yellow Arch is in aid of the brilliant Snowdrop Project charity, which supports survivors of human trafficking. Starting things off is Mari-Liis Tamm, who plays beautiful folk covers with her accomplice, Al Gordon. It's all very simple and gentle, but quite affecting.

I first saw Nile Marr playing solo four and a half years ago and this is the first time I've managed to catch him with his band, Man Made. Being backed by bass and drums seems to enable Marr to relax and, although his guitar playing skill is undoubted, it's his voice which immediately impresses. It's strong and flexible on opener 'Vegetative State', and when they play the single 'Carsick Cars' everything gels - pounding drums, driving bass and Marr's clear, harmonic guitar, all allied to a catchy pop hook. He still wears his trademark gold lame jacket, which sits rather incongruously on him, but, hey - if the songs are this good...

Houndstooth are based in Portland, Oregon and are touring the UK for the first time behind their second album, **No News From Home**. This is a set of loose, laid back tunes which often breeze along in a summer haze, though sometimes they possess a tequila kick.

They start tonight with 'Green Light', which is pretty low-key, and the more uptempo 'Baltimore', which gallops along nicely with lead vocal and guitar duelling for prominence. The atmosphere is light and all four musicians are relaxed, sharing jovial banter between themselves and the audience. After the last few months on the road, these songs have gathered a necessary extra layer of grit. The band really ups the ante in an extended eight-minute set closer 'Francis', where the drums clatter and the guitar shreds. A throbbing, insistent bass underpins the squall and they are deservedly brought back for a two-song encore.

Pete Martin

JOHN OTWAY & THE LITTLE BIG BAND

12 SEPTEMBER
GREYSTONES

English surrealism is a sullied concept, now most associated with the small 'c' conservatism of the Monster Raving Loony Party or the Last Night of the Proms. Aylesbury's John Otway has been doggedly representing the alternative since 1972, when Polydor Records offered him an eye-watering £1.5 million deal and promptly saw their money disappear down the drain. He's been revelling in the downward spiral ever since, reinventing himself as a cult cabaret act through relentless touring.

"I've only got two hits, so I've got to make them last," he tells the Greystones, interrupting 1977's 'Really Free' before jumping into a bonus chorus. John inspires a fandom that is beyond obsessive, and the pitch-perfect audience callbacks can leave an Otway outsider feeling like they've been left out of the joke. But even for the uninitiated there's still much to enjoy, such as his construction of a Britney-style hands-free mic with a coathanger and the inclusion of a theremin on two novelty songs, called (of course) 'Crazy Horses' and 'Dancing With Ghosts'. Every gig could be improved with a theremin. He introduces most songs by apologising for their poor quality or his own inability to play them, but this self-deprecation belies the fact that he's backed up by a damn good rock 'n' roll band, one that could give the current Fall line-up a run for their money.

Not all of the songs are as bad as he claims, either. 'Geneve' and 'Josephine' are both decent folk-rockers, while his other 'hit', 2006's 'Bunsen Burner', is a joyous reworking of 'Disco Inferno' ("I can make you phosphoresce, I can make you effervesce"). He can do stadium bombast too, as he demonstrates with Queen piss-take 'We Rock', after declaring that "the problem with 'We Will Rock You' is that there's too many words in it". The material is patchy, but Otway's infinitely likeable personality breathes life into the songs, and by the third encore (!) you can't help but root for this perennial loser so adored by his disciples.

Sam Gregory

LISTINGS

HOSTED BY
ALEX HEF-TEE

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An extremely active and lively October this year, with all kinds of exciting events jostling for space amongst the piles of leaves. Watch out for Connect The Dots Festival at brand new venue DINA on Cambridge Street, which runs between 10 and 24 October. Embrace the fresher weather, cover your ears and step out into the autumn air.

DJANGO A LA CREOLE

8 October | Yellow Arch Studios | £15/12

Evan Christopher, celebrated as one of the greatest jazz clarinetists of all time, returns to Sheffield with his band, Django a la Creole. Inspired by Django Reinhardt, 30s pioneer of gypsy jazz, their graceful performances also include Cuban, Brazilian and New Orleans influences, cooking up a smoky-smooth flavoured noise.

THE UNDERGROUND YOUTH

8 October | Picture House Social | £7.50/6.50

Psycho Nightmare presents a satisfying selection of psychedelic bands headlined by The Underground Youth from Manchester. Like flies caught in treacle, they combine shoegaze with psych freak outs set to a proper Manchester groove. Support from The Death Rays of Ardilla and The Shrines.

SKREAM

9 October | Hope Works | £15/12

Keeping people dancing across all sides of the board, Skream's sets are full of different and surprising sounds that will trigger most facial expressions within a 60-minute period. An extended set at Hope Works will have something for all the family. Support from buckfast soundscape creator Reg Naylor.

EUROS CHILDS

9 October | Harley | £10

Former Gorky's Zygotic Mynci frontman Euros Childs has produced nine solo albums since the band split in 2004, and new album, **Sweetheart**, is out on 2 October. His sweet, sincere, silly, sometimes serious music will soar through the Harley this month.

CONNECT THE DOTS FESTIVAL OPENING PARTY

10 October | DINA, Cambridge St | £5

Do not miss the especially special opening evening of Connect The Dots this year. The festival has quietly grown into an extensive web of carefully thought-out events meshing art and music. FIELDS - where audience members' mobile devices are used as a cacophony of speakers - is followed by Algorave and Computer Club's opening night party, where algorithms and audience members create the music.

LSS MEETS MADD AGAIN SOUND

10 October | Theatre Deli | £12

Zed Bias brings his new dancehall crew, Madd Again Sound, featuring the vocal talents of Trigga, Specialist Moss and Killa Benz. Also performing are Jus Now, another mish-mash collaboration of UK and Caribbean talent, including DJ Interface from Bristol and Trinidad's LAZAbeam, topped off by Toddla T's pal MC Serocee. Room 2 is hosted by Sheftown's Concrete Jungle and Greenbay Wax, showcasing the UK's best old-school jungle scene. Lively!

CHASTITY BELT

18 October | Harley | £7

Sweet, sharp and shimmery, four-piece Chastity Belt exploded onto the Seattle scene in 2012 with their EP, **Fuck Chastity Belt**. Cutting, funny lyrics are disguised by moody melodies and their riot grrrl attitude shines through despite their low-key sound.

RITETRAX LAUNCH PARTY

23 October | Yellow Arch Studios | £7

RiteTrax are a collection of artists and musicians putting on creative events for the love of it. Their launch party promises to be rammed full of local DJs, producers, live musicians, MCs, poets, graffiti artists, A/V extraordinaires and decor designers. Bozzwell, Riddimtion, Limit Break, Harleylikesmusic, Riders and Soundland are just some of the acts supporting Winston Hazel and AYU Acid.

CONNECT THE DOTS CLOSING PARTY

24 October | DINA, Cambridge St | £8/5

Two happy and heavy Lisbon DJs with a big bottomed, bumping grinder sound headline the Connect The Dots closing party at new venue DINA next door to the old Cole Brothers toy shop. This is the last day to catch the showpiece of the festival - art exhibition The Promise of the Internet - and organisers from Bad Taste Records will be determined to celebrate an inspiring two weeks with a banger.

HEADCHARGE HALLOWEEN REUNION

31 October | Yellow Arch Studios | £12/10

As Sheffield clubbing culture and heritage goes, Headcharge is the limit, the apex of 90s parties in the city. World-famous all-nighters from under the Wicker Arches drew crowds looking for the weirdest and most wonderful cutting edge electronic music and the best vibe you will find in any rave. A one-off Halloween fundraiser for Peace in the Park and Sharrow Festival promises to be something special, with three different 'Raveyards' playing the best and most twisted of beats.



ALABASTER DEPLUME

PEACH *Debt Records*

Alabaster DePlume, so called because it was the name he thought he heard joyriders shout at him in the street when he was wearing a skirt, describes his third album, **Peach**, as a “sweet and soft and good thing with a stone in the middle”. But there is no stone at the centre of Alabaster - it’s all sweet, delicious peach.

Peach continues in the vein of his impressive **Copernicus** album with a rich mixture of classical music, songs and spoken word, a combination which makes the softly spoken Mancunian a rare treat indeed.

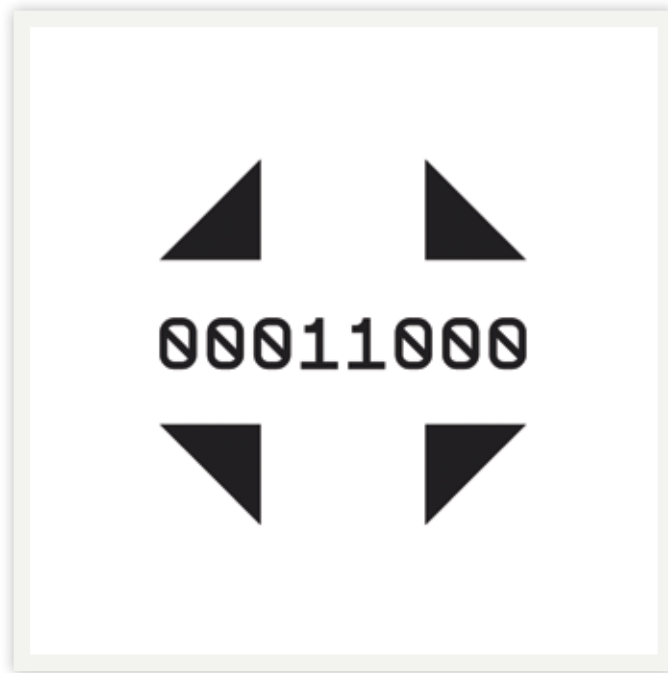
The songs are enchanting, full of open heart surgery honesty and sweet, melancholic, meditative melodies. This is an album to lose yourself within, to tightly wrap yourself around, its multi-layered fabrics like a thick duvet over your head, shutting out the world’s noise.

The instrumentals, in particular ‘Turpentine’, ‘Pastry’ and ‘Whisky Story Time’, are heart-wrenchingly beautiful. The poems are bold, thoughtful works. Alabaster’s delivery is unique, almost Shakespearean. He recognises this, plays with it, parodies himself. Adopting the moniker of Alabaster DePlume, how could he not?

Yet, it is through this that he is able to express a core of humanity - that we are all ridiculous, puffing our chests out with bombastic personas, but our feelings, fears and vulnerabilities are what make us human.

Peach ends with ‘I Am Strange’, a celebration of being odd with a chorus of people joining in with the refrain. I’m certainly happy to be in that chorus wearing a skirt, on the side of those with hearts.

Stan Skinny



CYGNUS

RADICAL USER INTERFACES *Central Processing Unit*

The momentum of the digital age drives the heartbeat of this futuristic electronic album. Texas is a hot part of the world, known for its cacti and big blue skies, but it’s also known for Dallas, and this is where Cygnus works his wizardry of waveform and arithmetic of arpeggiators. Taking unique sounds, a simple electronic dot on the horizon of silence, he builds it up and slowly makes it part of a new, audible landscape of flowing contour and orientation.

Sweet digital crispness seeps from the beginning bars of the title track, a funky patting of the electro bass and some head-swirling pitch changes snapping us to attention. ‘Nexus Telecoms’ has a bit more depth and flare. A jumble of tones and beats wash through the intro and produce a stable riff pattern after around 30 seconds. A crescendo of blips and synthetic wobbles splash like waves on the matrix, dowsing us in green lights. A hypnotic feeling gradually escapes from the near-mayhem and sings out the end of the piece like the slowly receding tide, flowing into the aptly titled ‘Arcade Killers’.

Final track ‘Electronic Slave’ has been made into a video by Sheffield creative collective Human. Featuring various uses of the polygon in computer design, it reminds me of when I used to dabble with my Acorn Electron in the early 90s. Already a dated machine, I loved the appeal of getting back to the basic functions of what the hardware was made for.

At only four tracks long, this album is over quickly, but it’s deep and rich enough to make it worthwhile. Like a fine whiskey, it’s distilled. The padding has been removed but the purpose remains - the kick and the flavour is all that you get.

Rowan Blair Colver



JULIA HOLTER

HAVE YOU IN MY WILDERNESS *Domino*

LA-based Julia Holter’s fourth full-length album is a vibrant, sparkling ocean of a thing. Two excellent singles bob brightly on its surface. The charming ‘Feel You’ with its bouncy melodies opens the album with a gentle playfulness, while ‘Sea Calls Me Home’, with its Nico-esque vocals and swaying pop beats, is so good it even withstands a sax solo.

With those more immediate tracks tempting you to wade in deeper, the rest of the album is awash with thoughtful and inventive dreamscapes, all flowing back and forth while Holter’s intimate thoughts overlap like the waves.

The haunting ‘How Long’, where Nico (again) meets Daniel Knox, is another highlight, gradually leading to a sinister fortune teller’s vision where “all the people run from the horizon”. Meanwhile, ‘Lucette Stranded on the Island’ shimmers and glows like a Martian sunrise.

Lyrical, it feels like a collection of single moments that have each been caught in a bubble and are passing slowly by, a few minutes of her life here and there captured through a soapy glaze. “I’m standing here on the ground / Betsy, my arms stretched out, looking up.”

Produced by Cole Greif-Neill (Beck, Caribou, Ariel Pink’s Haunted Graffiti), this elegantly creative and highly original album is more accessible and welcoming than Holter’s earlier work and withstands much repeated listening. You can either sit and watch the songs float by or let them slowly immerse you from the feet up.

Nat Loftus



LUKE VIBERT

BIZARSTER *Planet Mu*

Punning titles, check. Jazzy flourishes, check. Crisp hip hop drums, check. Incredibly, **Bizarster** is 42-year-old Vibert’s 24th proper record, not counting the dozens of EPs, singles and remixes he’s released since 1993. He’s an artist who’s found what he’s good at and sticks to it, with consistently enjoyable results.

Opener ‘Knockout’ is the most out-of-character cut on the album, with Luke turning his hand to the kind of colourful grime instrumental that Joker made his name with. An ominous bassline, heavier than anything else in Vibert’s catalogue, ensures the track delivers on its titular promise. It’s fast, punchy and addictive. Elsewhere, he slows the tempo for spooky acid-jam ‘Manolog’ and, as with 2002’s ‘Homewerk’ single, makes a sonic nod to Kraftwerk on ‘L Tronic’.

As with many Vibert albums, there’s an over-reliance on stock samples that are often lacking in imagination - “Knockout!”, “Can you feel it?”, “Let’s get ready to rumble!” - and some of the stuff here he could turn out in his sleep (‘Hey Go’ and ‘Officer’s Club’ are forgettable). But he knows his way around a melody and the productions are as tight as ever, such as on the infectiously bouncy ‘Ghetto Blast Ya’ and the splashy ‘Power Press’, which even includes a sample from Negativland’s 1987 horological classic ‘Time Zones’, proving that he can find more obscure sources when he wants to.

The album’s high point is penultimate track ‘Doozit’, with a woozy, autumnal guitar line that lends the tune an aimlessly pretty, cod-Oriental feel. Vibert finishes on an Amen smasher, signing off with pitch-bending madness and ragga vocals (“Don’t fuck arou-uund!”) layered over some of his wildest drum work yet. Vibert doesn’t change much - but then again, he doesn’t really need to.

Sam Gregory



BATTLES

PATTERNS IN DRONES AND BUZZES

.....

I was at a dead end job, pining for the halcyon days when I lived in Nottingham, somewhere around 3am in a cold Datacom centre in Northern Cuernavaca, Mexico. I was sitting alone, running some tests and watching **Torchwood**. A main character was back from the dead and clearing his house. A bizarre song played during the fast-paced sequence.

A quick web search yielded 'Atlas' by Battles. "Who are these guys?" Sod the test results. I needed to immerse myself in this band. Members of Helmet and Don Caballero were involved, so I was on board. Dave Konopka's Lynx took time to find, but also ended up in my collection.

Battles had a new fan. The intense madness they dealt intertwined with the feelings I had before moving to Sheffield.

The strange clash of Sheffield's abandoned industrial spaces and leafy suburbs felt in tune with their music. 'Snare' was my River Don theme tune. 'Ddiamondd' was the loud hustle and bustle of West Street on a Saturday night.

I neglect to mention any of these things when I email Ian Williams for this interview. He who once strutted with Don Caballero now waves a guitar and a keyboard, sometimes at the same time, in Battles.

So what has happened in the toroid-shaped world of Battles? "We toured on **Gloss Drop** for a couple of years. Spent another year in downtime mode, focusing on acquiring new gear, figuring out how to make it sing, try to find direction for new tunes. Then the last year we recorded and here we are."

That explains so much. The band has made it clear that they don't write much while on tour, focusing more on the intricacies of the live show. "I do write on the road. But as a band, all three of us with amps and drums, we can't."

Ian's output, when not handling Battles guitar and keyboard duties, speaks for itself. He's done solo stuff for the Connect Sessions and also a piece called 'Clear Image'. "'Clear Image' was a piece of music I made for the American Composers Orchestra. I played it last fall at Zankel Hall in New York. It was a regular chamber orchestra with me on electronics. I also did a thing called 'Public Transaction' with a percussion sextet named Mantra last winter." From what I could gather, this side of Ian won't be a one night stand.

Gloss Drop came out while I was in an intense part of my PhD. Most people I knew who were fans swore off Battles because vocalist and guitarist Tyondai Braxton was no longer with them. Truth be told, no one is irreplaceable in a band. Gloss Drop felt right. "Change, my dear, and not a moment too soon," as a perm-headed Doctor used to say in a certain BBC show. Gloss Drop danced less around the issue. It was a straight bullet.

It was also a transitional album. The fight or flight instinct permeated all tracks. You could feel it seeping through syncopated beats and vocals. 'My Machines' was a loud statement, assuring you that they were in it for the long haul. Gloss Drop's audacity was evident with the videos for 'My Machines' and 'Ice Cream'. You could feel it was all coming together amidst the chaos. Never mind fair-weather fans and bloggers with

"I'm aware of the history of musique concrète, but never thought of what we do on that continuum. I guess you could draw a connection in the sense that we're interested in sound as sound, and not necessarily having to be about how it's connected to an instrument. Besides the drums, a lot of times you might not recognise the source of the sound. Guitars sound like keyboards, keyboard lines are re-sampled guitar notes, abstracted recorded sounds - there's a round-about connection for you." Manipulated found sounds and re-converted instruments - sounds like Delia Derbyshire and Brian Hodgson would have enjoyed La Di Da Di.

Even if I didn't want to be confrontational, the elephant in the room was that major line-up change with Gloss Drop. It still surfaces in reviews and it's still a point of discussion within fandom. When I ask Ian about looking back to Gloss Drop, he is curt: "Gloss Drop was a response to a mistake. La Di Da Di was the opportunity to start afresh and on our own terms."

La Di Da Di is a clean slate which Battles have painted, erased, smudged and painted over again. It's never a baroque piece and no element could be removed without it falling like a Jenga tower. This puzzle of an album, with its strong contrasts, brings yet another face to the band. It's a strong leap forward.

With that said, did Battles have a particularly challenging song while recording? "My favorite is 'Tricentennial', which I think is looked over by most people as a little half way to a song, but not a real song. But the texture of that is really good, I think. Same goes for 'Flora>Fauna'."

La Di Da Di is a fresh start for a trio that has a veritable

"LA DI DA DI WAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO START AFRESH AND ON OUR OWN TERMS"

vendettas. The songs stood undefeated.

You often hear the term 'sophomore slump' used to describe the difficult second album, but is there a term for a third album? Ian ponders the whole process: "I think you need to take time off to re-ignite things. Everybody around you, from labels to managers to agents to fans, want you to hurry up and go straight from the road to the studio, because you're going to make more money, more quickly. But that usually ends up with people saying, 'Well, their old stuff was good'."

That backward mentality sometimes drowns good albums in solipsistic waves of nostalgia. Fans sometimes look back, not forward. For what it's worth, Gloss Drop felt like a cohesive yarn, much more than their debut, **Mirrored**. Just by existing it earned its accolades.

One of the finer points of the band is the cyclical nature of their music, as if a mathematical pattern lies hidden inside the drones and buzzes. I ask Ian if there is any truth in this. "[We're] into patterns! [**La Di Da Di**] had a fair bit of 16th note fed into an 8th note gate, captured by a 1/4 note loop, and then playing with the different ratios and seeing what unpredictability arises. The longer the logic chain, the more 'WTF' the results, but if you're doing it digitally you can save settings and begin to understand the beast."

Considering the electronic nature of Battles, I had to ask if they were fans of the BBC Radiophonic's rather enjoyable music. You could almost pick out a few hints of these in the fresh sounds and drones of La Di Da Di.

cornucopia of ideas. These ideas may come in slow, controlled bursts, like a greater integer function, so long as they remain a cycle that lives for many open intervals.

Samuel J. Valdés López



bttls.com

HEADSUP

RADKEY

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Three brothers from St Joseph, Missouri recently chose Sheffield to record their debut album, Dark Black Makeup. I had a chat with garage rock trio Radkey ahead of their gig at the Leadmill on 29 October about the city, what spawned their sudden change in sound and what it's like to have your dad as your manager.

What made you want to record your album in Sheffield?

Ross [Orton, producer for Drenge, Arctic Monkeys, Roots Manuva] came down to San Francisco back in April and we did four tracks, 'Love Spills', 'Le Song', 'Evil Doer' and a song called 'Innocents Tonight'. And after that session, we agreed that we'd head over to his place for the next session.

Did the city influence your album?

Absolutely. It's the fucking Steel City. I feel like if you make a record in Sheffield it's automatically gonna have some kind of badass manliness to it. We really dug our time there and it was actually the longest amount of time that we'd ever spent in a UK city.

How did making your first full-length compare to your two previous EPs?

It was definitely a lot more relaxed. We had about two weeks and it went by so fast. We were having so much fun. We didn't even take any days off, because every day pretty much felt like a day off. It was really cool to spend every day working on our music and hearing it come through his killer studio speakers.

With our EPs it was definitely a lot more of a rush. **Devil Fruit** was tracked in two days and we had shows booked in between the **Cat & Mouse** session, so we never really had the true studio experience until Sheffield and San Francisco.

The album definitely shows a more mature sound. Was this a conscious decision?

Definitely. We really wanted to show what we were capable of doing with this record. We've been at this for five years now and we have a lot more life experience, which really helped with writing some stories that people could relate to. We were serious about not repeating ourselves.

How does having your dad as your manager affect your life as musicians?

It makes everything much, much easier. Dad does all of the hard stuff, like paying attention to things, knowing when to cross the street, and making sure that we wake up on time. It's really cool to have him around.

What were your favourite things about Sheffield?

Going to the Kelham Island Tavern almost every night, ordering tons of pork scratchings and drinking Deception. Also we were staying at The Don Valley Hotel, which had tons of character and super nice people. Nice walk to the studio every day. Good times. We honestly had so many pork scratchings.

The people were so friendly. I had a nice conversation with this random dude on the street, and it was really refreshing to feel such a good vibe from someone who didn't know who I was. There was no reason to go out of your way to be pleasant to me, and you did. Really cool. It looks cool, and the pizza at Picture House Social was insanely good. Highly recommended. You probably know that though.

If you look at the back of our record, we actually took a picture of the giant drop hammer [in Brightside] and added it to the artwork. We're stoked to have so much Sheffield on our record.

Lewis Budden



Radkey play the Leadmill on 29 October | radkey.net

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THE TIME IS NOW is a UK-wide film project, launching Oct 15, celebrating women forcing change, curated and produced by Showroom Workstation and Film Hub North in partnership with Pathé and Twentieth Century Fox. THE TIME IS NOW is a BFI Film Audience Network initiative with the support of the BFI, awarding funds from The National Lottery.



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WWW.YELLOWARCH.COM

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GILMORE & ROBERTS

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{EVAN CHRISTOPHER - GYPSY JAZZ}

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SEMI DETACHED
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TUESDAY 13TH OCT
THE OTHER HALF
{OFF THE SHELF FESTIVAL}

FRIDAY 23RD OCT
RITE TRAX CREATIVE FESTIVAL
{WINSTON HAZEL / RIDDIMTION / WHERE'S NORTH?}

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FILMREEL

45 YEARS / ME & EARL & THE DYING GIRL

.....

Both **45 Years** (d. Andrew Haigh, UK, 2015) and **Me & Earl & The Dying Girl** (d. Alfonso Gomez-Rejon, USA, 2014) explore the impact of death via characters at very different stages of life – the me, Earl and ‘dying girl’ in one are high school teens, while the protagonist couple of 45 Years are on the brink of their 45th wedding anniversary. One follows Greg’s friendship with the ‘dying girl’, Rachel, someone he barely knows until his mother insists he hangs out with her. The other follows Kate, whose husband Geoff receives news that the body of his girlfriend, Katya, has been found in a glacier where she fell to her death many years before.

In both films, the dead or dying ‘girl’ is peripheral. Katya’s death is far in the past. And while Rachel is alive, we learn little more about her than we do about Katya, because in *Me & Earl & The Dying Girl*, the only character who matters is Greg. It’s all about the ‘Me’.

While 45 Years messes with how Western film (still) tends

ostensible awareness of this – for example, Earl’s impassioned attack on Greg for making everything about himself, not Rachel – those moments are precisely that: just moments. And just like Rachel, Earl does little beyond forcing Greg to be more confident and self-aware. (His other main contribution is making repeated references to “titties”, rendering him an over-sexualised black male side-kick to a white protagonist... Enough said.)

Ultimately, each film does what the majority of filmmaking still does best: focusing on an individual protagonist to the exclusion of much else, sidelining the potential experiences of others and using formal and stylistic devices to this end. Where they differ is that while *Me & Earl* seems unaware of the extent to which it does this, 45 Years foregrounds it to unusual effect.

The emotional flux shown in 45 Years is more evocative of human relationships than anything hinted at by *Me & Earl*. While the final shot shows us a moment of doubt on Kate’s part, the implication is that this too might change. This feeling that what’s

“BOTH FILMS SHOW US THAT THE DEATH OF SOMEONE DEAR TO US IS LIFE-CHANGING”

to align us with white male protagonists, *Me & Earl* – despite its pretensions to filmmaking self-awareness, with Greg and Earl cast as filmmakers – most decidedly does not. Narratively, these differences are clear, but it’s stylistically and formally that they’re most interesting and most powerful.

45 Years focuses on a female protagonist. Kate is in shot far more than Geoff, who’s frequently elided completely, blurred or just partly in shot, with Kate omnipresent. Such strategies generally service white male characters. 45 Years is especially interesting because its story’s starting point is Geoff’s. The letter is for him, and it’s he who has to deal with the memories and feelings involved (as Kate says: “Memories. They’re the things, aren’t they?”). In this context, the film’s favouring of Kate’s ‘story’ seems odd. We wonder – why are we not focusing on Geoff, on his feelings, on how he is coping?

In contrast, *Me & Earl* is a case study in subordinating the stories of female and black characters to a straight white male protagonist. Its use of screen space reflects this, relentlessly focused on Greg, on his feelings. While the film has moments of

happened is both deeply significant to Kate and Geoff’s relationship, yet also something fleeting, is underlined formally. While the initial establishing shot shows Kate walking the dog alone, its final instance has Geoff join Kate, having the night before said they’ll “get up and start again”. The ending of *Me & Earl* is all about Greg.

Both films show us that the death of someone dear to us is life-changing, but that we also have to move on. But while one film clearly indicates the depth, longevity and overwhelming consequences of the loss of a human being, the other turns it into the subject of a personal essay for the belated college application of its white male filmmaker protagonist.

Samantha Holland

FILM LISTINGS

COLLATED BY SAMANTHA HOLLAND

SUFFRAGETTE

SARAH GAVRON, UK, 2015

FROM 12 OCTOBER | SHOWROOM | £7.10

Part of *The Time Is Now!*, a season of films about women forcing change around the world and throughout history, this film has divided critical opinion regarding its message-driven artistry. Previews suggest it’s a powerful piece, with an excellent cast and a story that still needs to be told.

STRANGER THAN FICTION

MARC FORSTER, USA, 2006

18 OCTOBER | 7:30PM | 215 SHARROW VALE ROAD
£3 W/ CAKE AND COFFEE

Sharrow Reels presents this tale of a tax man plagued by narration only he can hear. Less existentially angst-ridden than other filmic meta narratives (*Being John Malkovich*, *Adaptation*), this is well worth watching for excellent, subdued performances and the tragicomic message that, as Fernando Croce of CinePassion says, “Cleverness can suffocate people.”

FANTASTIC MR FOX

WES ANDERSON, USA, 2009

25 OCTOBER | 1PM | MOORLAND DISCOVERY CENTRE,
LONGSHAW ESTATE | £6/£3

Handmade Cinema and the National Trust present this remarkable animation in a lovely setting, with a ‘woodland animation workshop’ the preceding Sunday (tickets £5). A fantastic film, stylistically in its ‘old fashioned’ and superb stop-motion technique, and narratively in its Andersonian examination of familial and wider anxieties.

SHOWROOM SHORTS

20 OCTOBER | 8:45PM | SHOWROOM BAR | FREE

The Showroom presents screenings of fantastic animation from the brand new Manchester Animation Festival in the relaxed environment of their café bar. Programmed by South Yorkshire Filmmakers Network.

FILM/COFFEE/MUSIC AT #9

8 OCTOBER (TBC) | 7PM | CAFE #9 | FREE

Café#9 is having work done this October, so screenings are subject to change. Check the Facebook page for details: facebook.com/filmsatnumber9

45 Years (2015)

FAVOURITES

OUR PICK OF INDEPENDENT SHEFFIELD

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SHEFFIELD SOUP

SHEFFIELDSOUP.WORDPRESS.COM

This city isn't short of good people doing good deeds, and new venture Sheffield Soup fits that mould admirably. Pennie Raven, who has done great things as one half of the Pecha Kucha Sheffield team, has brought the soup movement to us and it's already having a positive impact.

The concept is simple, but then all the best things are. Audience members pay £5 or more to attend an early evening event, at which four people pitch ideas for projects they want to make a reality. They each have four minutes to get their point across and the audience can ask four questions. At the end, audience members vote for their favourite pitch and all the money taken on the door is donated to the project with the most votes. It's micro-crowdfunding with no strings attached. Throw in some quality entertainment and free soup (really good soup, we might add, made and served by Silversmiths), and you're onto a winner.

We are very pleased to be among the judges who are helping with the shortlist ahead of each event, so we can vouch for the quality and diversity of the submissions, which have covered everything from charitable work through to innovative business ideas.

At the time of writing, the second event is due to take place, so we can't tell you the result of that, but we can tell you that the Real Junk Food Project, winners of Sheffield Soup #1, will be using their winnings to help buy an electric van. This is what it's all about - good deeds done right.



MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

5-11 OCTOBER
SHEFFIELDMENTALHEALTHWEEK.CO.UK

It's an oft-repeated statistic that one in four of us will experience some kind of mental health problem in our lifetime, but actually that's quite a misleading statistic. All of us feel the stress and strain of life at different points, to different extents, and all of us will know someone with first-hand experience of mental health problems, so it's in everyone's interests for this issue to be talked about frankly and openly, without stigma or discrimination.

That's where Sheffield Mind comes in. Part of the national network of 170 local Mind associations, the charity is all about helping people towards healthier and more fulfilling lives, providing tailored support to individuals and promoting the positive impact of good physical health on the mind.

Sheffield Mental Health Week is run by the charity every year with the aim of promoting positive mental health for all and showcasing some of the services available to the people of Sheffield. A range of events and talks will take place between 5 and 11 October. We would recommend **Bardo & Galore** (Fri 9 Oct, 7pm, Crucible Rehearsal Room), a play by The Bare Project informed by first-person accounts of psychosis, and **Gavin Extence in Conversation** (Thurs 8 Oct, 8-11, Theatre Deli w/ Off The Shelf), where the award-winning writer will discuss his latest novel about a young woman with bipolar disorder. You can also have a chat to the Sheffield Mind team on 9 October, 12-3.30pm, at Houlden Hall. All events are listed on the website.

CADS

CADS-ONLINE.CO.UK

CADS has really been going from strength to strength of late. The home-grown social enterprise now oversees more than 100 rented studio spaces across the city, and recently announced a new building taken under its wing, CADS Eyre Street, which is already home to Peddlar Market, among others.

The company's charitable arm, CADS Trust, is now up and running and hosts its first event this month. Shifting Fields (4 Oct, 11am-5pm, 121 Eyre St) will bring artists and scientists together to transform the space for a day of interactive, technological fun for all ages. Meanwhile, CADS Works (the mothership, just off Shalesmoor) will be the location for the Roundabout charity 'sleep out' next month. Good work, CADS.

STEEL CITY BEER FESTIVAL

21-24 OCTOBER
[KELHAM ISLAND MUSEUM](http://KELHAMISLANDMUSEUM)

This month sees the Steel City Beer Festival return to the city for the 41st time. Appropriately located in Kelham Island, the festival will span four days, with almost 200 real ales and 30 ciders on offer, including a beer brewed specially for the festival by Blue Bee.

There will be three separate bars with drinking/eating/seating areas split across two levels of Kelham Island Museum, live music on Thursday (Leeds City Stompers, highly recommended), Friday (Downtown Roots) and Saturday (Loxley Silver Brass Band, Rock 'n' Rollaz), and magician Ben Z also doing the rounds on Friday and Saturday. Proudly hosted by Sheffield CAMRA, this isn't one to miss. All info at sheffieldcamra.org.uk/festival.

SHEFFIELD PRINTMAKERS

SHEFFIELDPRINTMAKERS.COM

Sheffield Printmakers are, as the name suggests, a group of likeminded people making prints using various diverse techniques. Their aim is to promote printmaking regionally and nationally and join forces to provide a platform for makers in the city.

The group will host an exhibition at the Workstation this month (19-24 October), then you will be able to see a range of work at Sheffield Print Fair on Saturday 24 October, part of this year's Off The Shelf Festival. The Print Fair is always a good place to scout out new local artists and treat yourself to a couple of original prints. Stay tuned to their website for more info.

ROCO

338-346 GLOSSOP ROAD
THEROCO.ORG

The eagle-eyed among you may remember that we featured ROCO creative co-op 18 months ago when it was in its fledgling stages. Well, we're pleased to tell you that next month the creative hub will burst from its egg, fully formed with 17,000 sq ft of space on Glossop Road, between Sheffield Students' Union and The Harley.

ROCO are now looking for 'designers, artists, growers and makers' to populate their studio, office and co-working spaces. There will also be retail units available and an on-site deli providing high-quality brain sustenance. Get in touch with them if you're interested or pop your head in for a quick tour.

ANTIQUES QUARTER MARKETS

SHEFFIELDANTIQUESQUARTER.CO.UK

You are probably already aware that we have our very own antiques quarter in Sheffield, on and around Abbeydale Road, a fertile land of 30 shops and seven antique centres, full of unique character and independent spirit. What you may not know is that the people behind the quarter's member organisation also run regular markets at Abbeydale Picture House.

Their community flea markets (first Sun of every month, 10-3, £1 in, stalls from £10) are a good place to offload unwanted items or pick up a bargain, while they also host regular vintage markets (Sun 13 Dec, 11-4) with a pop-up cafe bar, arts and crafts, salvaged items and plenty more. Have a look at their site for more information on upcoming market days and for a list of all antiques quarter traders.

GREEN HOMES SHEFFIELD

GREENHOMESSHEFFIELD.NET

Spearheaded by local trading co-op Regather, Green Homes Sheffield is one of those simple but elegant ideas you wish you'd had yourself. Many people want to make their houses more energy efficient and reduce their footprint, but few have access to the knowledge and expertise to make it happen. The logical conclusion is Open Homes, a series of tours of other people's homes which have been improved with insulation, solar panels, low-impact extensions and more.

You can get the low-down on how to make these green improvements yourself or tap into Regather's network of local builders and installers who can make it happen at your humble abode. They're running tours on 3, 4, 10 and 11 October.

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FRI 16TH OCT - £10 ADV - 7PM *#

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+ SERAPH SIN

THU 22ND OCT - £15 ADV - 6.30PM *

ANTI FLAG+ RED CITY RADIO
+ TROPHY EYES
+ THE HOMELESS GOSPEL CHOIR

FRI 23RD OCT - £6 ADV - 6.30PM *#

I AM GIANT+ THE INTERSPHERE
+ DAY OLD HATE
+ CAUSE OF DENIAL
+ RISE OF THE NORTH

SAT 24TH OCT - £8 ADV - 6.30PM *#

THE VINTAGE CARAVAN

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+ JO QUAIL

FRI 6TH NOV - £13 ADV - 6.30PM *#

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MON 5TH OCT

RHODES

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SAT 10TH OCT

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FRI 23RD OCT

FOXES

MON 26TH OCT / SOLD OUT

FATHER JOHN MISTY

ANNA B SAVAGE

TUE 27TH OCT

PURITY RING

WED 28TH OCT

SIGMA

WED 4TH NOV

THE CORONAS

WED 4TH NOV @ PICTURE HOUSE SOCIAL

DOG IS DEAD

SUN 8TH NOV @ WEST STREET LIVE

BLACK PEAKS

MON 9TH NOV

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THU 10TH DEC

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COCO

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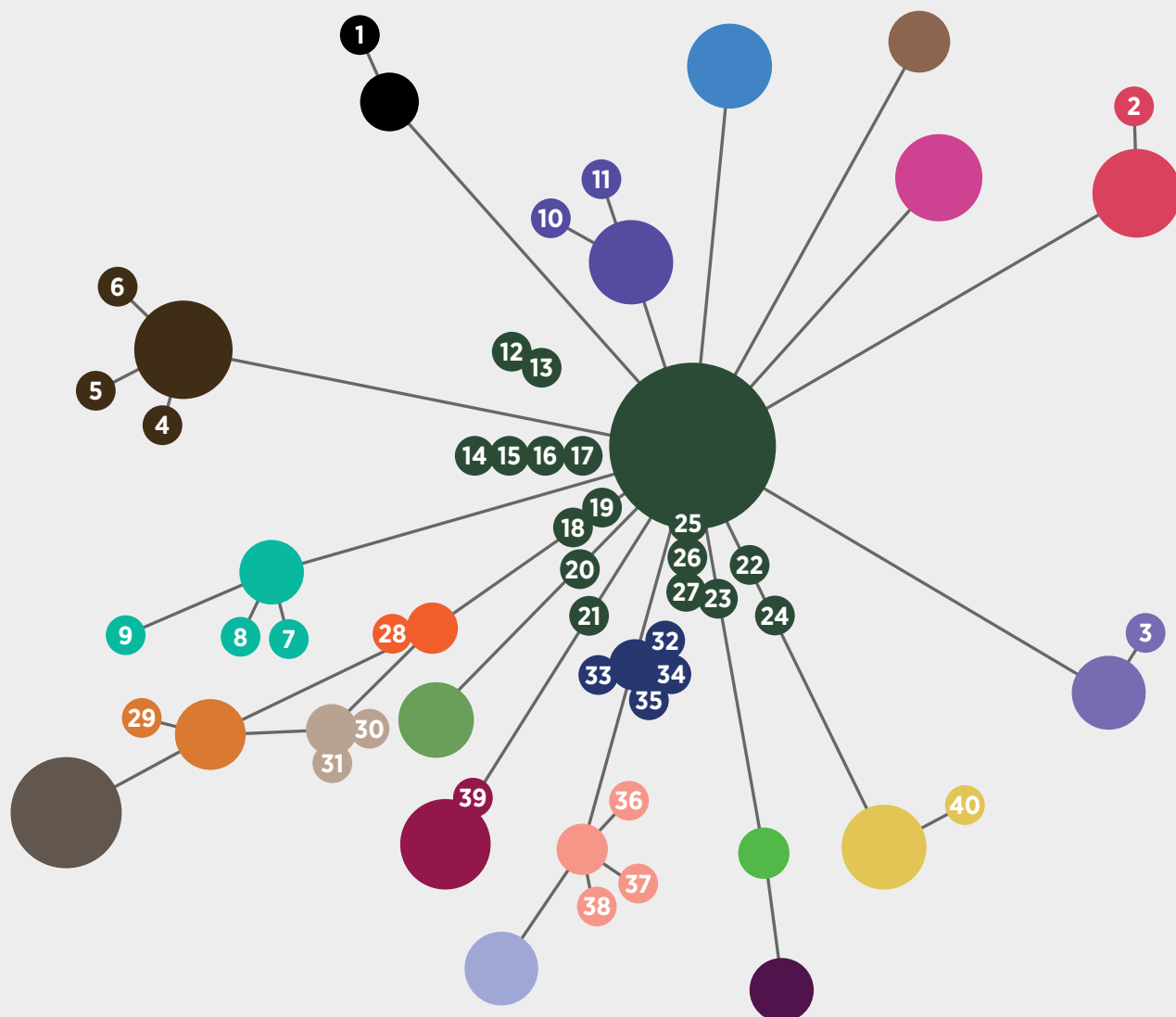


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